

Appendix B



Nevada's Electronic Government

Statement of Direction

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APPENDIX B

Preface

Due primarily to the astonishing growth of the Internet and e-commerce, technology is now widely acknowledged as a critical force in shaping the future. The need for skillful and committed leadership has become obvious¹. The state of Nevada realizes that a changing world requires changing responses, and is taking a proactive stance in addressing the need to move quickly into the information age.

In March 2000 the Silver Source e-government Steering Committee was created by Executive Order to “provide a plan for utilizing electronic technology to improve the delivery of governmental services and to expand the opportunity for economic development.”

On October 23, 2001 Governor Guinn established the position of CIO for Nevada. The CIO is responsible for the guidelines, policies, coordination and oversight of the technology used to process and move electronic information for state government. The CIO reports to the Governor and chairs the Nevada Information Technology Operations Committee (NITOC). Eight working committees comprise NITOC: Strategic Planning, State I/T Security, E-government, Technical Standards and Architecture, I/T Project Oversight, I/T Work Force, Justice I/T Integration and Nevada Electronic Record – Content Management.

The e-government Steering Committee provides overall direction, leadership and coordination of e-government efforts within state government, with particular emphasis on coordination between state, county and local government initiatives. It also recommends changes to state statutes, policies and procedures to encourage electronic delivery of services. The purpose of this *Statement of Direction* is to provide the basis for a strategic plan for electronic government in Nevada.

What is e-government?

The Internet is rapidly being incorporated into the way people manage their lives. From searching for information to communicating via email to purchasing goods and services, the web provides a fast, easy to use resource. From the Federal level through to the smallest cities and municipalities, government entities are investing in web-enabled services as the initial steps in implementing e-government.

Electronic government combines technology, inter and intra-agency cooperation and creativity to enable citizens and businesses to interact more efficiently with government using the Internet and other electronic communications.

There are two primary areas that best define what e-government is:

¹ *Eight Imperatives for Leaders in a Networked World*, John F. Kennedy School of Government, The Harvard Policy Group, Cambridge Massachusetts

- (1) online services that eradicate the traditional barriers that prevent citizens and businesses from using government services and replace those barriers with convenient access;
- (2) government operations for internal constituencies that simplify the operational demands of government for both agencies and employees.

Benefits of e-government

The constituent base for e-government touches all aspects of our society, including:

- Citizens
- Visitors
- Businesses
- Schools & Universities
- Legislature
- Tribal Government
- Federal Government
- Government Employees
- Political Subdivisions (State Agencies, Counties, Cities, Districts)
- Organizations (Non Profits, Associations etc)
- Courts
- Research Partners

Constituents will benefit from simplified access via individually tailored portals that provide government information and services 24-hours a day, every day of the year.

The state of Nevada will realize cost savings by reducing the labor required to process manual transactions. Constituent satisfaction will increase through simplified interfaces with the state government. Streamlining business processes will result in major savings in time and funding needs by eliminating duplication among agencies. The adoption of open standards will reduce maintenance costs and provide the flexibility to meet growing demands for services in the e-government environment.

Statement of Direction

The Silver Source Steering Committee has adopted the following principles to guide the development of e-government in Nevada.

Enterprise Approach

Electronic government provides a unique opportunity to unite executive branch agencies with other government entities in the common goal of delivering government services with a citizen-centric view within the state and around the world. The State is developing close working relationships with other government entities in Nevada, which provides us with an excellent opportunity to integrate service delivery from state, county, city and other entities. An enterprise-wide view allows government to leverage the taxpayers'

investments to provide services that are built around the users' needs, allowing them to complete all related tasks in one place.

Electronic government requires the sharing of information, joint development and use of technology, participation in enterprise contracts, shared portals and other means to leverage technical resources. This includes determining the benefits of internal development versus outsourcing to achieve a secure, service-rich infrastructure as quickly as possible. At the state level, all new I/T systems should be developed using open standards that can be easily incorporated into the e-government web-enabled architecture

Policy

One of the promises of e-government is to provide a single face of government to constituents. A comprehensive view of government and its missions must take priority over that of any individual agency or entity. This view must be defined, communicated and implemented through policies, standards and guidelines that unify electronic service delivery.

An e-government policy framework must be developed to address the social ("digital divide", accessibility, privacy), technical, business and legal issues of e-government. This *Statement of Direction* is the first step in that process.

Planning

Electronic government will fundamentally change the way people interact with government in Nevada. Strategic planning, with input from citizens, businesses and all levels of government, must form the basis of development and implementation of the e-government strategy. Tactical planning and program implementation must be supported by objective performance measures to ensure accountability.

Legislation

Legal groundwork for e-government is still being laid. The Federal Government is taking an active role in establishing standards, including the Paperwork Elimination Act, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce (e-sign) Act, the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA) and many more.

At the state level gaps, weaknesses and contradictions in current statutes tend to limit the flexibility of digital governance. These legislative barriers to e-government must be eliminated and emerging national and federal standards adopted where appropriate.

Funding

While e-government should eventually realize cost savings through increased efficiency, a significant initial investment is required to develop the technical infrastructure, applications, and operational support required to implement electronic service delivery.

Legislative and administrative barriers to innovative, non-traditional funding sources at the state and local level must be removed, and criteria to assess and implement funding alternatives must be established. This would include, but not be limited to, technology

funds, subscription and convenience fees, joint funding between multiple agencies or political subdivisions, data harvesting and advertising.

Privacy, Security and Accessibility

Electronic government will not succeed in Nevada without the trust of the people it serves. Intrinsic to building that trust is the understanding that private information and confidential communications will remain secure and private.

The state must establish a thorough and binding privacy policy regulating collection and storage of personal data, including sharing of data among governmental entities and public dissemination. This policy must be communicated to every constituent in plain language that is easily accessible from each online site. To guarantee a citizen's right to privacy, the policy must include a provision that any person using state services be able to request that their personal information not be given or sold to a third party. Emerging standards and technologies that address Internet privacy issues should be evaluated and integrated into the e-government platform as appropriate.

In addition to privacy issues, trust is built upon security and reliability of the online services and infrastructure. The state must evaluate their options and develop plans to address physical, network, and data security. These plans must include backup, disaster recovery, encryption, firewalls, and monitoring tools, among other considerations. Implementation of security measures will require investment in technology and training of staff.

Digital government must be accessible to as many citizens as possible. Accessibility must address the attitudes of reluctant and inexperienced users, including those with special needs, in addition to the implications of geography, economics, education, culture and physical disabilities.

Infrastructure

One of the barriers to efficient implementation and operation of online services is that applications are typically funded and developed as standalone entities. With the evolution from a mainframe environment to server-based computing, fragmentation is even more common. Since two of the main expectations of e-government are to provide a seamless interface to government services and concurrently to reduce the cost of service delivery, there is a need to provide a common, flexible technical architecture and infrastructure to support new services. This infrastructure must be based on open standards that ensure a high degree of interoperability among different hardware and software platforms from multiple vendors.

Per Executive Order, the Department of Information Technology will "establish a simple, common and secure electronic infrastructure and will develop policies and procedures related to e-government initiatives". This includes providing common service modules that all entities can use to implement digital signatures, electronic payments and similar tasks.

Streamlined Business Processes

Moving to online service delivery provides agencies the opportunity for strategic innovation and streamlining of business processes – going far beyond the tactical automation of any individual service.

Integrated systems will reduce costs by allowing the streamlining of business processes and deploying professional skills to higher-value activities. Internet technology can be used to minimize costly over-the-counter channels of service delivery. Digital government can also be the impetus for reviewing and eliminating unnecessary processes before they reach the Web.

In order to achieve the cost reductions available with e-government and to provide a self-service, 24 by 7 environment for all constituents, it is critical that every state agency supports the concept of integrated systems and is willing to break down the silos of information that exist today by adopting enterprise-wide standards. This will require a governance process that balances the enterprise against the virtues of agency autonomy and is governed by a CIO with responsibility for the enterprise.